





FROM THE EDITORS

Moving into the holiday season, we are thankful for the many friends, memories, and catches we have made, and experienced through Bassin' In The Boot. With the Christmas season upon we hope to enjoy time with friends, family, and on the water chasing bass. We invite you all to remember the many small businesses we have covered this year as you shop for all the bass fishermen in your life. Whether it be some jigs from Bryant's Custom Jigs, tungsten from Rougarou Tackle Co., a new rod from Tangi Rods, a weekend away at Lakeview Lodge, a boat care kit from Cajun Boat Balm, or simply stopping in at U-Pak of Ferriday to fill up and stock up your new boat from Bryan's Marine; we hope you will remember the many people of the Louisiana bass fishing industry that work every day to provide the best products to the best fishing community around.

As always we encourage you to look through Bassin' In The Boot's articles, both new and old, for the best people, products, and experiences in bass fishing the bayou state. Please hop over to our partners page on the website and check out the growing list of partners and their products. You are sure to find just what you need to go Bassin' In The Boot!

From our partners, sponsors, and us here at Bassin' In The Boot, we wish you and your family the merriest of Christmases and many tight lines into the new year!

- Charles Anderson & Jeffery Anderson



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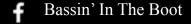
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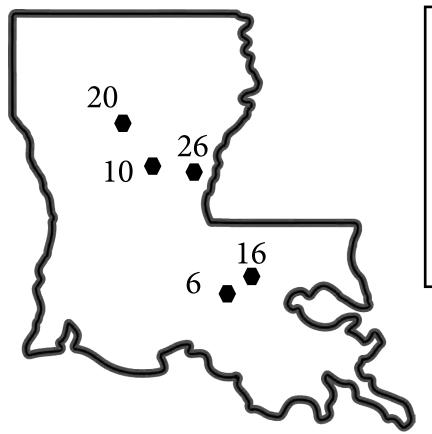




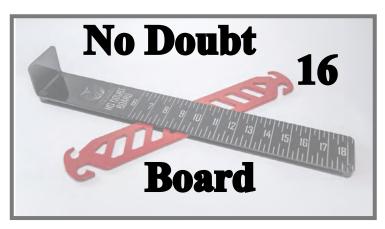
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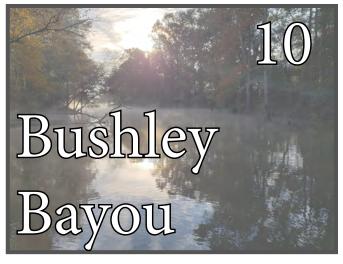
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Cajun Outboards Boat Care Tip

WINTER SERVICE

With the air temperature dropping, as well as the water, many people pick their boats up for the winter months. During this time is when you should bring your boat in to your local dealer, and let them do the annual service. as well as go through the boat and make sure everything is in working order. The last thing you want is taking your boat out for the first time in the new year, only to have a few minor issues that can lead to a bad day on the

ANNUAL SERVICE FOR A 4 STROKE ENGINE:

CHANGE ENGINE OIL

CHANGE ENGINE OIL FILTER

CHANGE LOWER UNIT OIL

CHANGE FUEL WATER SEPERATOR

CHANGE FUEL FILTER ON THE ENGINE

INSPECT/REPLACE WATER PUMP

INSPECT ALL BATTERY CONNECTIONS

AND FLUID LEVEL

INSPECT/REPLACE ALL ANODES ON

THE ENGINE

INSPECT/REPLACE SPARK PLUGS

INSPECT THE COOLING WATER

PASSAGE

INSPECT POWER TRIM AND TILT

GREASE ALL GREASING POINTS

INSPECT PROPELLOR, THRUST

WASHER, PROP NUT, AND COTTER PIN

INSPECT SHIFT/THROTTLE LINKAGE

AND CABLE

MAKE SURE THE KILL SWITCH IS

WORKING PROPERLY

ANNUAL SERVICE FOR A 2 STROKE ENGINE:

CHANGE LOWER UNIT OIL

CHANGE FUEL WATER SEPERATOR

CHANGE FUEL FILTER ON THE ENGINE

INSPECT/REPLACE WATER PUMP

INSPECT ALL BATTERY CONNECTIONS

AND FLUID LEVEL

INSPECT/REPLACE ALL ANODES ON

THE ENGINE

INSPECT/REPLACE SPARK PLUGS

INSPECT THE COOLING WATER

PASSAGE

INSPECT POWER TRIM AND TILT

GREASE ALL GREASING POINTS

INSPECT PROPELLOR, THRUST

WASHER, PROP NUT, AND COTTER PIN

INSPECT SHIFT/THROTTLE LINKAGE

AND CABLE

MAKE SURE THE KILL SWITCH IS

WORKING PROPERLY

ANNUAL SERVICE FOR A BOAT AND TRAILER:

INSPECT NAV/ANCHOR LIGHTS AND WIRING

INSPECT BILGE PUMP, HOSES, AND WIRING

INSPECT LIVEWELLS PUMPS, HOSES, AND WIRING

INSPECT STEERING CABLES/HOSES AND HELM

INSPECT DRAIN PLUG FOR ANY LEAKS

INSPECT ALL ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS

INSPECT ALL TRAILER LIGHTING, BRAKES, BUNKS, WIRING, HUBS, BEARINGS, AXLES

As I stated earlier, the wintertime is the best time to get your boat into the shop to make sure everything is in order before your first trip on the water. The little bit of cost you will pay to get an annual service done on your boat is far better than the cost of having an issue on the water. So, this winter while your boat is sitting in the garage, give your local dealer a call and set up an appointment to bring it in and get an annual service done.

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In an area known as "Four Rivers," there are no shortage of waters to fish near Jonesville, LA. Located in Catahoula Parish, the area is known for its numerous waterbodies. Bordered by Tensas and Ouachita Rivers to the north, and Little River to the west, the three come together to form a confluence into the Black River flowing south. In the immediate area there are multiple lakes, streams, creeks, and bayous. One of the smaller bayous in the area, tucked off the main highways, and with a boat launch you'll miss, even when you know where it is at, provides an ample theatre for bass warfare. Known to the locals as "Bursely Bayou," "Brushley," and "Bursely," the mapped "BUSHLEY BAYOU" is a hidden destination in Catahoula Parish stuffed with bass.

The small waterbody provides stormwater storage and relief of the neighboring waterbodies, namely the Ouachita River and Little River as a part of the greater Red River backwater flood control plans. The basin was historically connected at both ends, to the Ouachita River to the north and to Little River to the south, but has been dammed up on each end and now primarily serves as an irrigation and stormwater reservoir, but maintains a continuous creek flow to Little River and various interconnected streams, creeks, and bayous. Much of the southern creek portion of the waterbody flows through the Catahoula National Wildlife Refuge.

The northern end of the bayou, beginning with the dam separating it from the Ouachita River, is the area most commonly fished. With navigable areas stretching approximately five miles southward through various forks, the area offers a few hundred acres of prime fishable waters. The various channels and coves offer a variety of cover and bass



An early November morning on Bushley Bayou as Miss-Lou Bass prepares for a blastoff.

Fishing the sunlit banks of the coves of Bushley Bayou on a cool late fall morning.





Mr. Ken Mahoney with his big fish of a 17.17 pound winning bag on Bushley Bayou.

Sunrise anticipation for blastoff on Bushley Bayou with Miss-Lou Bass Club.



habitat including numerous points, innumerable laydowns and varied sloping shores. Additionally, the bayou has a large number of bayous, creeks, and drains as tributaries supplying nutrients, oxygenation, and fresh water to the reservoir, as well as prime spawning habitat. With various tributaries lined and spotted with protruding cypress tree lines, the area is a flipping and pitching dream.

Based on personal experience, the water-body has a very healthy black bass population. While not known for big bass, there have been many 5+ pounders pulled out of the waterbody. In a fishery where numbers are not generally an issue, common winning tournament bags are in the 8-12 pound range, depending on time of year and other factors. In a recent tournament with Miss-Lou Bass Club, Mr. Ken Mahoney sealed the win with a 17.17 pound sack with a 5.17 pound kicker, proving the fishery holds nice fish.

In addition to bass fishing, the bayou also holds a large crappie population, and is a common destination for crappie fisherman in the area. With many of the flood control projects in the four river basin, emphasis on fishery management appears to be a priority for projects completed on Bushley Bayou. The bayou is located just minutes north of Jonesville, LA which provides ample supplies, fuel, and dining options. If you are looking for a hidden gem in the central Louisiana area, check out Bushley Bayou for some quality time on the water.





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NO DOUBT BOARD By Offbeat Outdoors



There are a few inventions that makes you think, "Duh, why didn't I think of that?" The No Doubt Board is just that simple, but ingenious. Now maybe it's different for you but I have found myself measuring a fish to make sure it is long enough to keep only to get out the culling beam to decide if it's heavier than the last one I had to measure before tossing in the livewell. Well now there is a simple combined tool that makes that a lot easier.

Inventor, entrepreneur, and owner of Offbeat Outdoors, Derek White is an avid fisherman. Derek has a passion for fishing and the outdoors. With several inventions and products under his belt, Devin offers the products from his business website https://offbeat-outdoors.com. The No Doubt Board measures and culls fish without multiple tools or hassle.

With all aluminum components, the No Doubt Board will never rust and the heavy duty construction will make it a favorite tool come tournament day. The measuring board is composed of two 3/16" thick aluminum sides with a rotating culling beam that stores between the rule and the back. With bright white lines on a glossy black background, the measurements are easy to read leaving no doubt if the fish is legal.

Single out the keeper easily every time and never worry if you kept the wrong fish. The



culling beam rotates to reveal the easy to use hooks for hanging cull tags. A system so basic yet accurate you'll appreciate the simplistic design.

I picked the tool up in Denham Springs on a recent business trip down south. I could instantly tell it was a well-made product but I wanted to put it to the test on the water.

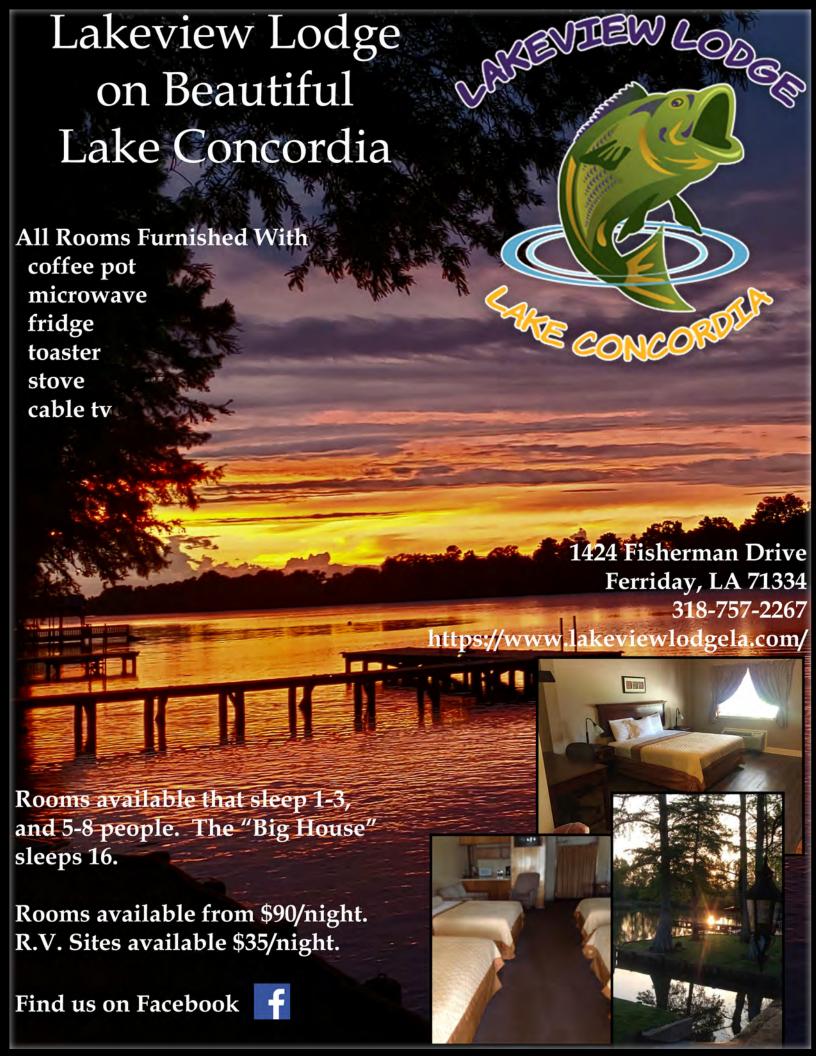
I took the No Doubt Board to Bushley Bayou where I knew I could catch plenty of fish; plenty of fish in similar size to test the board. After catching 4 or 5 I decided to put the board to the test. Pulling the tagged fish from the live well I hung two of similar shape and size off the board and made the cull. I can see how this board will improve the ease of culling come tournament day.

The No Doubt Board won't help you catch more fish but it will make determining which fish to keep quicker and easier and that might lead to an extra cast or two and ultimately increase your fishing time resulting in the win. At \$60 the patent pending invention is one that will for sure find a home in my boat. Geaux Bassin' and cull









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A Visit With





Somewhere in a bar pit or bayou the bream are biting. You've caught over a hundred and they are still biting. As the old saying goes, "you don't leave fish biting" but you're out of bait, so what do you do? Well if you're Keith Fussell you improvise and you build your own bait out of a twig, some fishing line, and smear it in the bottom of the cricket bucket to make it smell perfect. Then you catch another sixty bream.

Keith made that first "lure" at age 11 and from that point on he was hooked. This is further explained on the back of his packaging as a "lifelong dream of a young country boy raised in the backwaters and bayous of central Louisiana."

I visited with Keith at his home in Georgetown, a small community in Grant Parish in central Louisiana. Google directions were easy enough to find the location but in all honesty you'd need to be headed there to get there. The reason that I was headed there was to talk with the owner of Red Alert Lures.

I first met Keith at the Louisiana Outdoor Expo in Lafayette located inside the Cajun Dome back in July. We talked and had planned to reconnect but time, schedules, and life had gotten in the way until this day.

I pulled into the driveway and up to a modest country home located in the pine woods on the edge of the Kisatchie National Forest. Soon I was greeted by Keith and his four legged companion, Jax, that seldom left his side. As I entered the front door of the house, I immediately stepped not in to his living room but into his workshop. His passion was spread from one side of the room to the other atop several lure making and assembly stations.



The Red Alert Lures "Louisiana Triple Threat" is one of the most versitle multidrop rigs and the only umbrella rig that will fold up and fit in one space in your tacklebox (see below and next page).



We first turned our attention to the Louisiana Triple Threat lure where he was in the middle of assembling what looked like several hundred at a time. The bass catching contraption, lightly based on the famous "Alabama Rig" was designed to be lightweight, easy to use, versatile, and foldable. The stiff wire umbrella has 3 arms that extend about 2 inches into the swivel and hook assembly that comes pre-rigged with the Red Alert's Bayou Shad 3.5" paddle tail swimbait, or one of the other plastics offered by Red Alert Lures. Hanging from the middle of the tripod is a single spinner blade to attract the bass ready to ambush the lure. If you untie the Louisiana Triple Threat it will fold neatly into a tray of your tackle box, rather than taking up an unruly amount of space in your tackle trays. I listened skeptically as Keith continued to talk about the versatility of this bait.

A venture out to the utility trailer he pulls to every trade show revealed a mass collection of all of the Red Alert Lures inventory including lures, plastic baits, popping corks, crankbaits (even ones that light up), and the Red Alert Inline Spinner – the maiden lure bearing the company's name. An inline spinner with a gold blade, swivel connections and a quick lock tied to a fully customizable swim jig. A must have in any bass angler's arsenal.

Of all the baits, the Bayou Shad caught my eye. As a guy that throws a lot of moving baits, I am always looking for different trailers. The 3.5" paddle tail swim bait comes in at least 11 stock colors covering all the basics, and then some. Bayou Shad colors include: Thunderstruck, Trout Gravy, Cayenne Mad Shad, Skin and Bones, Yak Slime, Shadow Recruit, Cajun Sky, Mardi Gras Mambo, Louisiana LaRou, Ivory Slick, and Gator Puke. I will soon try out

the Thunderstruck color to mimic shad on the back of my bladed jigs and spinnerbaits.

A second soft plastic, the Cobra Floater, is designed to look like a small King Cobra snake and has magical powers to entice fish to bite as a slow falling or floating plastic (with a light wire hook). It comes in colors such as Blue Blood, Piroux Magic, and Rougarou, to name a few, and can be fished in a variety of ways including weightless or Texas rigged as a worm.

Red Alert Lures offers a variety of custom baits and lures, but there's more to this company. Keith, a disabled veteran, has prototyped a lure that combines several of his passions. Those two passions are helping veterans and his faith in Jesus Christ. The lure, "Follow Me", is in the shape of an ichthys. It has a spinner inside and atop the tail, with hooks under the belly and on the bottom of the tail, and will be engraved with "Follow me, I will make you fishers of men!" Keith is hoping to get the lure stamped out of brass once the prototype is perfected. He plans to donate half of the profits from the lure to the Wounded War Heroes of Louisiana.

I left Georgetown with a bag of goodies and an open mind. I specifically was interested in fishing three of the baits as soon as I could get on the water. I took the Louisiana Triple Threat, the Original Inline Spinner, and the Kajun Kwivver Underspin to a local favorite fishing spot where I usually catch fish. I started searching for fish with a War Eagle Sexy Shad spinnerbait to make sure I could find fish where they normally are located.

Once I found fish I pulled out the underspin and threw it and caught a few. The bait ran true and did what I expected it to







Top: The Red Alert Lures soft plastics packaging featuring their motto: "Man Made...Fish Approved."

Bottom Left: Red Alert Lures "Cobra Floater Worms" that will float when rigged unweighted on a light wire hook, or will slow the fall rate enticing strikes.





Bottom Right: Three of the Triple Threats folded neatly into a standard 3600 series tackle tray, with plenty of room to fit at least three more rigs and some soft plastic trailers.

do. I'll pair it with my favorite plastic swimbait and use it from time to time no doubt.

Next I turned to the inline spinner bait. I have to say it takes a little getting used to but I did eventually get a fish to bite but failed to land it. I'llbepracticingmore with this particular lure.

Lastly I tried the Louisiana Triple Threat. Let me sum it up by letting you know I called Keithandordered enough to put the miniature "A Rig" on our website so you guys can try it too. I caught fifteen plus on this bait with the Thunderstruck Bayou Shad that came prerigged right out of the package. I treated the bait basically like a spinnerbait and tossed it at laydowns, cypress trees, and drug it across grass landing fish way more than I expected. I'm sold on the effectiveness of the Louisiana Triple Threat and I love the fact it's made right here in Louisiana by a U.S. Veteran.

Keith Fussell is a Disabled American Veteran making his living as the owner of a fishing lure company. He exemplifies the characteristics of a proud American, living in smalltown, USA, putting his blood, sweat and tears into his business each and every day. This is the type of company and man we at Bassin' in the Boot can get behind and support. If you are interested to find out more about Red Alert Lures look them up on Facebook or online at http://redalertlures.com and get you some products that are Man Made...Fish Approved!





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A Day on Lake Concordia With Connor Rushing

It was at the Junior Southwest Bassmaster's meeting earlier in the year I first met Connor Rushing and his dad, Larry. I got the opportunity to talk briefly with them prior to the meeting held at the Bass Pro Shop in Denham Springs. I got the impression of a young man that was well-mannered, respectful, and knowledgeable about bass fishing.

As the fishing season continued and the high school qualifiers came, Connor and his partner Ethan Simon have done well so far. In the Henderson Tournament, the duo finished 4th with 11.8 pounds and had a 12.33 pound sack good for 3rd at the Eastern qualifier tournament out of Doiron's Landing. Connor fished the Northern qualifier without Ethan, due to ACT obligations, and managed an 11th place finish with a 6.78 pound bag of greenbacks. The team plans to fish the spring together in several more high school tournaments representing Central High.

I got the opportunity to fish with Connor on my home lake of Lake Concordia after a planned pre-fishing trip down south to scout for the high school qualifier was cancelled due to weather. We launched late morning after his drive up on a Monday morning. As he pulled up at Lakeview Lodge on the south end of Lake Concordia, he stepped out of the truck and went to work immediately hooking up graphs and preparing the red Champion boat of his to launch.

Within minutes we were on the water and headed out. Connor has fished Concordia numerous times and has done very well on the lake. He had a few spots in mind and I had a few I wanted to see how he fished (always looking to pick up pointers on my home lake). We settled close to a popular spot where the overflow of the lake is discharged in to a bayou to begin the flow towards the Black River Complex south of town. He took out a crankbait, chartreuse with a black back and began looking for fish on the point. As we moved deeper into the cove, he settled for a Texas rigged Baby D Bomb and a punching rig to canvas the reeds for fish. A fish or two bit but nothing got the bait enough to secure a hookset.

What do you want to be when you grow up? I remember being asked this in 8th grade English and I really had no idea. I'm not fully convinced I know today. I asked Connor Rushing the ever familiar question and he didn't hesitate at all with his answer, "I want to fish professionally." He said it not as a rehearsed answer but as if it was already happening. Connor has been fishing a number of years with Junior Southwest Bassmasters out of Den-

ham Springs and is now a senior on the Central High School Bass Team.

Continuing to fish I turned the conversation to his long term goals, asking about his college choice and if he planned to fish at that level. He told me he didn't plan to go to college right away but wanted to fish the "Opens" for a couple years as a non-boater before fishing as a boater and moving up the ranks to fish professionally. Extremely confident of his plan he continued to tell me of the steps needed to reach the top of the fishing world.

As we fished out of the cove and down the shoreline of the lake towards the next spot, "The Little Blue Hole", I knew he would catch a fish; the question was, what size? Fishing the area a little tighter than most do, Connor kept the boat within 10 yards of the bank and was throwing that same crankbait when he got his first bite. A 3.35# healthy bass put up a nice fight but ultimately lost the battle as Connor took a seat, rod overhead, keeping the line tight, he reached in the water and landed the fish. The "kid" landed the fish with ease and an overall lack of energy, until he had him in hand. Then he celebrated with a high five and a big ole grin. We fished nearly 5 hours. In those hours we hit several spots with various cover and structure. At one particular brush pile the young angler called his shot. He told me, "I've fished this before, there's going to be a fish here." He no more than got the words out of his mouth before he set the hook and boat flipped a pound, maybe pound and a half bass. Once again I saw him smile, that grin was his only reaction.

We talked of guys he most liked to watch and pattern his fishing after and a couple



Top Left: Connor preparing to land a nice fall crankbait bass.

Top Right: Late evening flipping on Lake Concordia while discussing fishing goals for the young angler.

Bottom Right: Seeing the serious approach taken by the yound angler to the fun-fishing with nothing on the line.

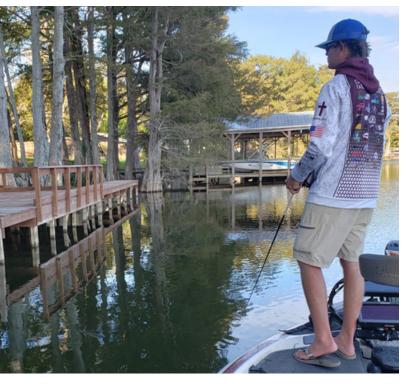




professionals he called by name. We talked of Greg Hackney in particular not knowing the professional angler was actually on the lake. We had noticed a wrapped boat across the lake earlier but couldn't make out who it was. Being from the area, I knew it wasn't a boat we see on Concordia often. The boat came by us at the near end of our day and we made out the Academy logo and the details of the boat that no doubt belonged to Greg Hackney. Greg known as the "Hack Attack" was fishing nearby and this made Connor excited. We fished in the direction where they had shut their boat down hoping to get an encounter with the professional angler. We kept looking for the boat but it was as if it vanished.

Connor, ever curious as to where the boat could have gone, we headed north looking for the angler. No luck. We can only assume they loaded at a private residence and left the lake. Getting to talk with one of his favorite professional anglers on the water would have truly made the trip exponentially better. Disappointed but excited, Connor made the decision to call it a day and head to the launch. He had the couple hour drive ahead of him and school the next day.

Here at Bassin' in the Boot, we love the innocent enthusiasm that high school anglers show on the water. They are not as easily rattled on the water as adults; after all, they are just fishing and having fun. I could see the transition in this young angler. He is still a "kid" having fun and enjoying growing up but he has a serious side when it comes to fishing. He has a goal to fish on the big stage and I hope he makes it. If you get a chance, attend a high school tournament weigh in and you'll see exactly what I am referring to in the anglers' attitude and enthusiasm for the sport. Get out and Geaux Bassin'.





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